United Nations E/CN.4/2005/69–E/CN.6/2005/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 December 2004

Original: English

Commission on Human Rights
Sixty-first session
14 March-22 April 2005
Item 12 of the provisional agenda*
Integration of the human rights of women and the gender perspective

Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-ninth session
28 February-11 March 2005
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda**
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": review of gender mainstreaming in entities of the United Nations system

Joint work plan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains the joint work plan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for 2005 and an assessment of the implementation of the work plan for 2004. It is submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/44 of 23 April 2003.

* E/CN.4/2005/1.
** E/CN.6/2005/1.

04-64360 (E) 100105

I. Introduction

1. On the basis of Commission on the Status of Women resolution 39/5 of 31 March 1995 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1997/43 of 11 April 1997, a joint work plan is prepared annually for the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (the work plan for 2004 is contained in document E/CN.4/2004/65-E/CN.6/2004/7). In its resolution 2003/44 of 23 April 2003, the Commission on Human Rights welcomed the cooperation and coordination between the Division and the Office aimed at mainstreaming women's human rights, and also welcomed the joint work plan and encouraged the Secretary-General to ensure its implementation and to continue to elaborate the plan.

II. Assessment of the implementation of the current work plan

2. During the implementation of the current joint work plan, the exchange of information between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has continued.

3. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the High Commissioner continued to exchange documents, reports and information relating to the work of the human rights treaty bodies and circulated those documents to the chairpersons and members of the treaty bodies. The Office continued to provide information for and comments on the reports provided by the Division to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee.

4. In the course of the year, the Division continued to suggest experts on women's rights for the training activities of the Office with respect to reporting under international human rights instruments, as well as a number of other training and technical cooperation activities, expert meetings and panel discussions.

5. The Division and the Treaties and Commission Branch of the Office of the High Commissioner continued to work closely on reporting and other matters relating to human rights treaty bodies, including pursuant to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387 and Corr.1). In regard to that report of the Secretary-General, the Division is part of the action 2 reference group, which is consulted by the action 2 task force on all strategic and substantive questions and provides support to the task force in the development of new tools and guidelines.

6. The Division and the Office continued coordinating their databases and web sites, as well as updating them. The Division facilitated the distribution of information pertaining to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, especially its concluding comments, through the listserv maintained by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

7. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the High Commissioner continued to cooperate with regard to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Staff

members of the Division and the Office remained in contact and exchanged information regarding issues arising under and procedures in connection with the Optional Protocol.

8. The Office and the Division facilitated the attendance of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences at the thirtieth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (12-30 January 2004), at the invitation of the Committee. The Chief of the Treaties and Commission Branch of the Office also met with members of the Committee at its January 2004 session.

9. The Division contributed to and participated in the meeting of persons chairing human rights treaty bodies, organized by the Office of the High Commissioner and held from 21 to 25 June 2004 in Geneva. The Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women participated in that meeting. The Division also provided input to the background documentation for and participated in the third inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies, also organized by the Office and held in Geneva from 21 to 25 June 2004. The Division cooperated closely with the Office in developing the draft guidelines on an expanded core document (HRI/MC/2004/3).

10. The Division organized a judicial colloquium on the use of international human rights law, from 17 to 19 May 2004, and a training workshop on implementation of and reporting under the Convention from 19 to 21 May 2004 in Nassau, with the participation of an expert of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. A staff member of the Office participated in the event.

11. The Office organized a treaty reporting workshop for the preparation of Timor-Leste's initial human rights reports, held in Dili from 8 to 10 September 2004, with the participation of experts of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. A staff member of the Division also participated in the event.

12. In November 2004, the Division and the Office jointly organized a round table of national human rights institutions and national machineries for the advancement of women. The round table aimed to strengthen the capacity of national machineries for the advancement of women and national human rights institutions to promote and protect the human rights of women through the development of institutional links and joint strategies. The event was hosted by the Conseil consultatif des droits de l'homme du Maroc. Two members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women also participated. The statement adopted by the meeting is being widely disseminated by the Division and the Office.

13. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the High Commissioner continued to support improved cooperation between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights. The Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights at its sixtieth session addressed the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-eighth session. The Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women addressed the Commission on Human Rights at its sixtieth session. On that occasion, a joint event was also organized, with the participation of the acting High Commissioner for Human Rights, the

Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Chairpersons of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women and an expert of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, as well as other United Nations, government and civil society representatives.

14. Coordination of the preparation of reports to be submitted to intergovernmental bodies continued. When requested, the Division for the Advancement of Women contributed to reports prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner, and the Office contributed to reports prepared by the Division.

15. The Office moderated the online discussion on human rights of women in November 2004, as part of a series of online discussions hosted by WomenWatch, and facilitated and moderated by members of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, in preparation for the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Summaries of the online discussions will be submitted to the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

16. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the High Commissioner, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, continued to work on a guide to human rights and legislative practices to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

17. The Division is finalizing, with the collaboration of the Office, a review of the integration of women's human rights and gender perspectives in the reports of special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights between 1996 and 2003.

18. The Division and the Office continued to cooperate within the framework of inter-agency mechanisms, and especially the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Both participated actively in the activities of several of the Network's task forces, including those on women, peace and security; gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals; gender and trade; and indigenous women.

III. Joint work plan for 2005

19. Cooperation between the Office of the High Commissioner and the Division for the Advancement of Women will continue in 2005 to strengthen attention to the human rights of women and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all human rights activities in the following major areas: support for human rights treaty bodies; support for intergovernmental bodies and special procedures; technical cooperation, advisory services and meetings; awareness-raising and outreach; and inter-agency cooperation. The major activities planned in those areas are outlined below.

A. Support for human rights treaty bodies

20. The Office of the High Commissioner and the Division for the Advancement of Women will continue the practice of past years of coordination, cooperation and information exchange between treaty bodies. Activities will include the exchange of documents, reports and the results of the work of the treaty bodies, and the circulation of those documents to the chairpersons and members of the treaty

bodies; follow-up to the recommendations of the sixteenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies and the points of agreement of the third inter-committee meeting (including providing technical assistance to countries wishing to use the draft guidelines in preparing an expanded core document, preparation of a comparative report on the working methods of all treaty bodies, preparation of a report on reservations to the core human rights treaties and preparation of a proposal on the standardization of terminology used by the treaty bodies with regard to the technical elements of their work).

21. The Division for the Advancement of Women will contribute to the preparations for and conduct of the seventeenth meeting of persons chairing human rights treaty bodies, from 20 to 24 June 2005, the fourth inter-committee meeting, also from 20 to 24 June 2005, and any ad hoc meetings in relation to the work of the treaty bodies that may be convened during 2005. The Division, the Chairperson and designated members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will participate in those meetings. The rapporteur designated by the third inter-committee meeting on the draft reporting guidelines and other matters relating to the harmonization of their reporting guidelines, Kamel Filali, and the Chief of the Treaties and Commission Branch of the Office will attend the thirty-second session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in January 2005. The Division and the Office will jointly organize a side event on treaty body reform on that occasion.

22. Exchange of information and collaboration will continue among staff of the Office and the Division, as well as designated Committee members, with regard to communications and enquiry procedures.

B. Support for intergovernmental bodies and special procedures

23. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the High Commissioner will continue the established practice of cooperation in areas including support for the participation of the Chairpersons of the Commission on the Status of Women and of the Commission on Human Rights in each other's sessions, as well as the participation of the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in their sessions. The Division and the Office will support the convening of a possible joint meeting of the bureaux of the Commissions, via videoconference. Senior officials of the Division and the Office are again expected to address the Commissions, including in any panel discussion that may be organized in conjunction with their sessions.

24. The High Commissioner for Human Rights will participate in a high-level panel during the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the theme "Synergies between national-level implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women".

25. Cooperation will be enhanced in the preparation of reports on similar issues to be submitted to intergovernmental bodies, such as those relating to trafficking in women and girls and to violence against women. The Office will contribute to the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women that is being prepared by the Division in accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/185 of 22 December 2003. It participates in the task force set up by the Division on the study. The

Division will provide input to the study on violence against children prepared by the Office. Inputs and comments will be sought and provided for other reports, as requested. The Division will continue to provide targeted input for the work of special procedures.

26. The Division and the Office will jointly organize a discussion, in connection with the meeting of the special procedures office holders in June 2005, on the integration of gender perspectives into the work of the thematic mandates, based on the review concluded by the Division in 2004.

C. Technical cooperation, advisory services and meetings

27. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the High Commissioner will improve early information exchange and coordination on technical cooperation activities and cooperate whenever possible in such activities, especially with respect to training activities on reporting under international human rights instruments and follow-up to concluding comments, and cooperate in preparing and piloting training packages on international human rights instruments.

28. The Division for the Advancement of Women will contribute to the implementation of the plan of action entitled "Strengthening human rights-related United Nations action at the country level: national human rights promotion and protection systems", developed by the Office of the High Commissioner in cooperation with the United Nations Development Group and the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, pursuant to action 2 of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387 and Corr.1).

29. The Division and the Office will jointly organize a workshop on follow-up to concluding comments and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, with the participation of representatives of both Committees, to be hosted by the Government of Egypt in 2005.

30. A staff member of the Division will participate in the annual meeting of the field representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner. Two staff members of the Division will participate in a series of briefings at the Office of the High Commissioner to share experiences in relation to the working methods and servicing of treaty bodies, intergovernmental bodies and special procedures.

D. Awareness-raising and outreach

31. The Division and the Office will continue to ensure that the electronic database covering the seven treaty bodies is up to date, fully operational and accessible to both. The web sites of the Division and the Office will also be systematically updated and improved to enhance information about human rights in general and women's human rights in particular. The Division will continue to monitor progress with respect to integrating gender perspectives in the work of intergovernmental and expert bodies.

32. The Office will publish in 2005 the revised edition of *Gender Dimensions of Racial Discrimination*, in cooperation with the Division. The Division and the

Office, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, will finalize and publish, also in 2005, the guide on human rights and legislative practices to combat trafficking in women.

E. Inter-agency coordination

33. The Office of the High Commissioner and the Division for the Advancement of Women will continue, under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, to cooperate within the framework of inter-agency mechanisms, including particularly in respect of activities related to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), to the Millennium Development Goals, to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and to the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.